

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Cooperative Program for  
Bathymetric Surveying of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone

Between the

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)  
and the

U. S. Geological Survey (USGS)

Starting Date \_\_\_\_\_

I. INTRODUCTION

Whereas the President of the United States on March 10, 1983, proclaimed on behalf of the United States a zone contiguous to the territorial sea for a distance of 200 nautical miles known as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) within which the United States would have sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring, exploiting, conserving, and managing living and nonliving resources:

Whereas in order to understand the geography and resources of the EEZ, the United States needs to conduct bathymetric surveying and mapping of the EEZ;

Whereas the EEZ encompasses such a large expanse of ocean area that surveying and mapping should be conducted on a cooperative basis by the agencies in the Federal Government responsible for such activities, and through the identification of priority areas in the EEZ for surveying and mapping;

Whereas the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) have complementary responsibilities for bathymetric surveying and mapping and each agency requires high quality depth data in order to produce bathymetric maps of the EEZ;

~~Whereas USGS primary responsibilities include definition of sea floor~~  
geology and geological processes, as well as qualification and quantification of resources within the EEZ;

Whereas NOAA primary responsibilities include surveying, mapping, oceanographic analysis, fisheries management, and analysis of resources within the EEZ;

Therefore, NOAA and USGS agree to participate in a cooperative program for bathymetric surveying and mapping of the EEZ.

## II. REFERENCES AND AUTHORITIES

NOAA is authorized by 33 U.S.C. 883a et seq. to conduct bathymetric surveys, to process and publish nautical data and information and to enter into cooperative agreements with public and private organizations.

USGS is authorized by 43 U.S.C. 31 to examine the geological structure and mineral resources of the United States and to enter into cooperative agreements with other Federal departments and agencies.

## III. PURPOSES AND POLICIES

The purpose of this agreement is to establish a joint NOAA-USGS program for bathymetric surveying and data analysis of areas within the EEZ.

Specifically, the cooperative program will include the following stages: (1) a joint review of EEZ bathymetric data requirements, (2) identification of priority areas, (3) development of an annual survey plan, (4) execution of that plan, (5) processing of the data collected, (6) construction of regional bathymetric data bases, and (7) compilation of bathymetric maps.

Joint research involving scientists from both agencies is encouraged.

## IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITY REGIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

The agencies recognize that in order to use their resources efficiently, they must establish priority regions in the EEZ for surveying and data analysis. The following regions have been identified as areas in which surveying and analysis are to occur.

### A. Pacific Coast

The first EEZ region to be surveyed as part of this cooperative program lies offshore of California, Oregon, and Washington. This area was selected in part because of the interest in hard mineral resources in this region, particularly in the area of the Gorda Ridge.

Within the Pacific coast region, the USGS intends to conduct a survey using the GLORIA wide-swath side-scan sonar system. To complement the GLORIA survey and to provide a bathymetric data base, NOAA intends to deploy its ships using the SeaBeam survey system and Bathymetric Swath Survey System (BS<sup>3</sup>). Initially, these survey activities will focus on the outermost continental shelf, the continental slope, and the upper rise.

A schedule of activities for FY 1984 and FY 1985 within the Pacific coast region is attached.

### B. Atlantic Coast

The agencies will cooperate, consistent with their respective funding and other responsibilities, to survey the Atlantic coast region of the EEZ. Emphasis will be placed on the area known as the Baltimore Canyon Trough.

The agencies will develop a joint approach to conducting a bathymetric survey of the Atlantic coast region and to support the addition of new surveying systems, such as SeaBeam and SeaMARC, on NOAA vessels.

#### C. Alaska

The agencies undertake, consistent with their respective funding and other responsibilities, to begin a bathymetric survey of the Alaska region in FY 1986. The USGS already has plans to do a survey using the GLORIA system at this time in the Alaska region.

#### D. Remainder of the EEZ

The agencies agree to develop a schedule for conducting surveys in the Hawaii, Caribbean, and Pacific Trust Territories regions of the EEZ, consistent with optimum ship utilization.

### V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCIES

#### A. Joint

In addition to the joint program responsibilities identified in Part III above, the agencies will jointly design and specify all products produced as a result of this cooperative program.

#### B. NOAA

NOAA has the lead role in the collection and dissemination of bathymetric data and products. Collection of data will be done aboard NOAA vessels using the SeaBeam, BS<sup>3</sup>, and other surveying systems.

NOAA will produce and provide to the USGS a magnetic tape file of bathymetry in standard NOAA format, with merged and corrected bathymetry and navigation, within approximately one month of the completion of a cruise dedicated to this program.

NOAA will produce and provide to the USGS, within approximately six months from the delivery of the magnetic tape file, bathymetric maps, derived from the survey data, at a scale commensurate with the resolution of the data, ~~as well as a digital magnetic tape of the contours in geographic coordinates.~~

#### C. USGS

USGS will transfer, consistent with its funding and responsibilities, funds to NOAA for the processing, analysis, and preparation of maps of EEZ regions carried out by NOAA surveys as part of this cooperative program.

USGS will make data acquired by the GLORIA survey system available to NOAA for review and use as required in support of NOAA's bathymetric surveying, mapping, and data processing within the EEZ.

## VI. FUNDING

The agencies agree to cooperate in funding this cooperative program in the following manner, subject to the availability of appropriations and consistent with other program responsibilities.

NOAA will fund the operation of NOAA vessels and survey equipment to the extent they are dedicated to the conduct of surveys in support of this cooperative program. USGS will provide and transfer to NOAA under this cooperative program, funds required by NOAA to analyze and process survey data obtained, including the preparation of bathymetric maps.

The financing of this cooperative program will be reviewed on an annual basis and specified either in an addendum to this agreement or in a letter(s) signed by responsible agency officials.

## VII. MANAGEMENT

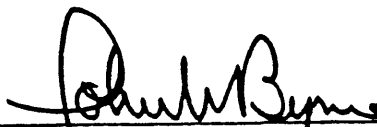
Within NOAA, this agreement will be implemented by the National Ocean Service.

Within USGS, this agreement will be implemented by the Office of Energy and Marine Geology.

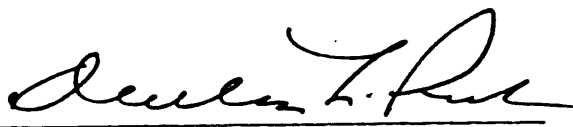
## VIII. DURATION

This agreement will become effective upon the signature of both the approving officials of the respective agencies entering into this agreement.

This agreement shall remain in effect until terminated by (1) mutual agreement, (2) advance written notice by either agency, or (3) the operation of the terms of this agreement, whichever shall occur first.

  
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John V. Byrne, Administrator  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration

Date 18 April 1984

  
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Dallas L. Peck, Director  
U.S. Geological Survey

Date April 24, 1984